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July 17, 2007

The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Chairman  
House Committee on Agriculture  
United States House of Representatives  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Agriculture  
United States House of Representatives  
1305 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Peterson and Ranking Member Goodlatte:

On behalf of the National Rural Health Association (NRHA), I am writing to express our support for the 2007 Farm Bill.

The NRHA is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership organization that provides leadership on rural health issues. The Association's mission is to improve the health of rural Americans and to provide leadership on rural health issues through advocacy, communications, education and research. The NRHA membership consists of a diverse collection of individuals and organizations, all of whom share the common bond of an interest in rural health.

While the Farm Bill does not usually draw the attention of an association representing health providers, the NRHA strongly believes in the improvement of our entire rural communities. We are very supportive of your efforts in the area of rural development.

In addition, we appreciate your inclusion of rural health care providers in economic development efforts. Health care is too often ignored in discussions of economic development in rural communities, yet the health care industry is usually the first or second largest employer. The NRHA endorses your bill, which would provide grants for rural providers to improve quality initiatives and invest in information technology. These types of programs have been shown to be prudent, cost-effective methods of improving patient safety, quality of care and coordination of care. We anticipate this being an integral part of many rural communities' economic development efforts.

The NRHA greatly appreciates your ongoing leadership on rural health issues. We are pleased to support this legislation and look forward to working with you to advance our mutual goals of economic opportunities for all rural Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "George W. Miller".

George Miller  
President